

ICYMI: “Addiction help is available in New Jersey”

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Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)



In Case You Missed It

Addiction help is available in New Jersey

Vanessa Vitolo is originally from Absecon and now lives in Caldwell. She is a recovering addict and aspiring social worker who has advocated for treatment for those suffering from addiction.

Courier-Post

My name is Vanessa. I am a daughter. I am a sister. I am a niece. I am a friend. I am a co-worker. I am just like someone you know. And I am an addict.

A few years ago, after crying myself to sleep in a dark, dirty jail cell, I had a dream about a little girl. She was surrounded by a huge, loving family. She loved her mother immensely. She was lucky enough to have a big sister to look up to and a younger sister to call her best friend. Her aunt was a teacher and taught her the importance of education. Her uncle was a firefighter and taught her the importance of law and order. She attended high school at a private, religious institution where she was a cheerleader and softball player. This little girl had big dreams and pursued them in college.

Suddenly, I was awake, and this was not a dream. This was my reality.

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My journey to addiction did not happen overnight. After college, I was diagnosed with an illness and prescribed painkillers. For a couple of years, I was what I refer to as a functioning addict. However, my substance abuse got worse every day. One day, when I could not get pills, I did something I promised myself I would never do – I tried heroin. At that point, my addiction spiraled out of control. I completely isolated myself from my friends and my family. I was broken and I was hopeless.

Eventually, the consequences of my addiction caught up to me. I was sentenced to drug court. After the reviews of the drug court team, I was sent to a long-term treatment program and halfway house. This is where I set down the foundation of my recovery. Integrity House helped me put the pieces of my life back together again. Eventually, I was able to get my own apartment. I got my license back and got a car. I am a manager at my job. I am on my final phase of drug court. I just applied to go back to school to pursue a career in social work. Most importantly, I work on my recovery every single day and I am able to make my family proud.

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Three years ago, I could not imagine a day where I would wake up with love in my heart, hope for today and dreams for my future, but by the grace of God, I was one of the lucky ones. Everyone deserves a second chance, and everyone deserves the hope and redemption I found through recovery. ReachNJ.com provides that chance. It gives the people of New Jersey a place to turn when they don't know where to go for help with their addiction.

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My name is Vanessa. I could be your daughter. I could be your sister. I could be your niece. I could be your aunt. I could be your girlfriend. I could be your friend. I could be your co-worker. If someone you love needs help, and you don't know where to turn, please visit ReachNJ.com or call 844-732-2465. Hope is just a phone call away.

Full Article [HERE](#).

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